

1886

A C T S
AND
P R O C E E D I N G S
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
IN THE
UNITED STATES
OF
A M E R I C A,
A. D. 1792.

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A C Y B

P R O C E E D I N G S

C O M M I T T E E

T R I B U N A L



A N N O

A D

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

Minutes of the General Assembly

OF THE

Presbyterian Church in the United States for the Year 1792.

May 17th, 1792.

THE General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States of America, met, agreeably to adjournment, in the Presbyterian Church at Carlisle, and was opened with a sermon, by the Revd. Mr. Woodhul, the last year's moderator.—From 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2. *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom. Preach the word, be instant in season, and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.* Constituted with Prayer.

The Assembly then proceeded to the choice of a moderator and clerks, and the Rev. Dr. John King, was chosen moderator, and the Rev. John Black and Drury Lacy, were chosen clerks.

The General Assembly, proceeded to inquire into the fulfillment of the missions to the frontiers, which had been appointed at the sessions of last year; when it appeared that Mr. Condict, did not execute the appointment which was made. Mr. Boyd, by order of the assembly, read before them a narrative of the manner, in which the mission was fulfilled by him, accompanied with remarks and observations on the subjects which had been recommended to his attention, by the former Assembly: on the hearing of which, the fidelity and diligence of Mr. Boyd, in the discharge of the important trust committed to him, received the full approbation of the assembly.

The assembly taking into consideration the importance of continuing missions to the Frontiers, and the expediency of making arrangements for securing permanent advantages to the church from those missions; appointed the Rev. Messrs. Boyd, Austin, and M'Millan, with Doctor Tilton, and Mr. M'Lene, a committee, to suggest those measures most proper, in their opinion, for the assembly to adopt, in order to effect this good purpose:—and to make report as soon as possible.

The synods of Virginia and of the Carolinas, having failed to make an official report to the General Assembly, of the measures adopted by them respectively, for supplying the Frontiers of the

the United States with the ordinances of the gospel; On motion, ordered, that Messrs. Graham and Lacy, be a committee, to prepare and bring in a written account of the prosecution of the plans which were stated to the General Assembly last year, from the synod of Virginia, respecting missions within their bounds. And that Doctor M'Corkle, and Mr. Porter, be a committee to report such plan as may have been adopted for a similar purpose, with respect to the synod of the Carolinas. The assembly do moreover repeat their injunction to those synods, to send up an annual account of the proceedings in the premises and of their success to the General Assembly.

The several Presbyteries were called upon for their reports, in regard to the order of the General Assembly upon the subject of a collection of materials for a history of the Presbyterian Church in America; when it appeared that they were diligently engaged in the business referred to them, and that satisfactory communications respecting it might be ready for the next General Assembly:—Whereupon, ordered, that the several presbyteries be careful to continue their attention to this subject, and be prepared to report upon it to the next General Assembly.

Resolved—that the Committee heretofore appointed to enquire into the state of the funds placed in the hands of the trustees of New-Jersey college by the synod of New-York and Philadelphia be continued, and directed to prosecute the objects of their appointment and report to the next General Assembly.

An extract from the will of Mr. James Lesly deceased; attested by John Broom and John Bingham executors of said Lesly, was introduced and read, and ordered to be recorded on the minutes of the General Assembly—and is as follows.

Item. “ I give and bequeath all the residue of my estate real and personal to the trustees of the college of New-Jersey, called Nassau Hall, and to their Successors, to be by the said Trustees and their successors constantly kept at interest on good security: and it is my will that the interest arising from the said residue of my estate shall be appropriated to the Education of poor and pious youth of the presbyterian denomination, for the work of the gospel ministry, and to no other purpose whatsoever: provided nevertheless, that if it should so happen that the said interest should in any year be more than sufficient to pay for the education of such youth in that year actually educated on this fund, then and in that case the said Trustees may and shall appropriate the surplus of such interest for such year, towards the support of a missionary or missionaries to preach the gospel and administer its ordinances to the frontier inhabitants of these United States; if the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in these states shall judge it necessary to send missionaries to the Frontiers in the year in which such surplus shall arise; and provided that such surplus shall not exceed thirty Pounds. But if the said surplus shall exceed thirty pounds New-York
“ currency

" currency, in that case my will is that thirty pounds of it only
 " be appropriated to the support of missionaries as aforesaid, and
 " that the residue of such surplus be added to the principal sum,
 " and put out at interest with it. And if it shall happen that the
 " General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church aforesaid shall
 " not judge it necessary to send missionaries to the Frontiers as
 " aforesaid, in the year in which such surplus shall arise, then it is
 " my will that the whole of such surplus shall be added to the Ca-
 " pital or principal sum and put out at interest with it.

A true Copy, Examined by

JOHN BROOM, }
 JOHN BINGHAM. } *Executors,*

New-York May 7th. 1792.

The Minutes of the convention of the committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and of the General Association of the state of Connecticut, were taken into consideration, an extract of which is as follows.

" Considering the importance of union and harmony, in the christian church, and the duty incumbent on all its pastors and members to assist each other, in promoting, as far as possible, the general interest of the Redeemer's kingdom; and considering further, that divine Providence appears to be now opening the door for pursuing these valuable objects, with a happy prospect of success.

This convention are of opinion, that it will be conducive to these important purposes—

That a *standing committee of correspondence*, be appointed in each body, whose duty it shall be, by frequent letters, to communicate to each other, whatever may be mutually useful to the churches under their care, and to the general interest of the Redeemer's Kingdom.

That each body should from time to time, appoint a committee consisting of three members, who shall have a right to sit in the others general meeting, and make such communications as shall be directed by their respective constituents, and deliberate on such matters as shall come before the body; but shall have no right to vote.

That effectual measures be mutually taken to prevent injuries to the respective churches, from irregular and unauthorized preachers.

To promote this end, the convention judge it expedient, that every preacher, travelling from the limits of one of these churches into those of the other, shall be furnished with *recent testimonials*, of his regular standing, and good character as a preacher, signed by the moderator of the Presbytery, or association, in which he received his license, or, if a minister, of his good standing and character as such, from the moderator of the presbytery, or association

giation, where he last resided, and that he shall previously to his travelling as a preacher into distant parts, further receive a recommendation, from one member, at least of a standing committee to be hereafter appointed by each body, certifying his good qualifications as a preacher.

Also, that the names of this standing committee, shall be mutually communicated and also that every preacher travelling, and recommended as above, and submitting to the stated rules of the respective churches, shall be received as an authorised preacher of the gospel, and cheerfully taken under the patronage of the presbytery, or association, within whose limits he shall find employment as a preacher, And

That the proceedings of the respective bodies on this report, be communicated to our brethren of the congregational and presbyterian churches throughout the states."

Upon mature deliberation, the assembly unanimously and cordially approved of the said plan, and to carry the same into effect, appointed—The Rev. Doctor John Rogers, Dr. John Witherspoon and Doct. Asahel Green, to be a committee of correspondence, agreeably to the said plan: and it is moreover agreed, that this assembly, will send delegates, to sit and consult with the General Association of Connecticut, and receive their delegates to sit in this assembly, agreeably to another article of the plan, as soon as due information shall be received that it is adopted on the part of the General Association of Connecticut.

The Revd. Doctor M^cKnight, Dr. M^cWhorter, Mr. James Woodhull, Dr. S. S. Smith, Dr. Alison, Dr. Nesbitt, Mr. John B. Smith, Mr. Graham, Mr. Lacy, Mr. M^cCall, Mr. M^cDonald, and Doctor M^cCorkle,* were appointed a standing committee to certify the good qualifications of the preachers travelling to officiate in the bounds of the association of the state of Connecticut; and it was moreover agreed, that any preacher travelling as aforesaid, shall have at least the name of one of the committee, who shall belong to the synod, from whose bounds he came.

Agreeably to the injunction of the General Assembly last year to the several presbyteries, on the subject of contributions for the purpose of raising permanent funds, the presbyteries rendered in their reports respectively.

Ordered that the synodical reports be brought in and read.

"The synod of New-York and New-Jersey report to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, agreeably to their direction in a letter dated May 25th 1789, that the synod consists of five presbyteries, Albany, Dutchess, Long Island, New-York and New-Brunswick."

1. "That the Presbytery of Albany consists of seven ministers, four of whom have pastoral charges and three have not charges

* By an after order, Revd. Aaron Woolworth, of Long Island, was added to this committee.

ges. They have nineteen vacant congregations ten of which are each able to support a minister and nine are not yet able and they have two licentiates under their care as appears by their report to synod. N^o. 1.

" 2. That the presbytery of Dutchess consists of five ministers four of whom have pastoral charges and one has no charge. They have four vacant congregations two of which are able each to support a minister and two are not able—one of their members has been removed by death Aug. 24. 1790, as appears by their report to the synod. N^o. 2.

" 3. That the presbytery of Long-Island consists of twelve ministers, eight of whom have pastoral charges and four have not charges, they have five vacant congregations four of which are supposed able each to support a minister and one is not yet able, as appears by their report to synod. N^o. 3.

" 4. That the Presbytery of New-York consists of twenty-two ministers nineteen of whom have pastoral charges, one has the care of the Academy a Hackinack and two have not charges—they have six vacant congregations two of which are able each to support a minister and four are not yet able—they have one licentiate, and one of their members has been removed by death in October 1790, as appears by their report to synod. N^o. 4.

" 5. That the presbytery of New-Brunswick consists of fifteen ministers twelve of whom have pastoral charges, one is president and one vice president of the college of New-Jersey and one has no charge—they have ten vacant congregations, one of which is able to support a minister in a single capacity, four in their present united state are able to support two ministers and five are not able, and they have four licentiates under their care, as appears by their report to synod. N^o. 5.

JOHN RODGERS, Stated Clerk of Synod.

Philadelphia, October 21st, 1791.

" The synod of Philadelphia, report to the General Assembly of the presbyterian church, in the United States of America, agreeably to their direction; that the synod consists of five presbyteries: viz. Philadelphia, New-Castle, Carlisle, Lewes and Baltimore.

" 1. Philadelphia presbytery, consists of thirteen ministers; eleven of whom have charges and two of whom have not charges: they have five licentiates; nine vacancies, of which four are able to support each a minister, three are able in connection to support a minister, and two are not able: they have during the year past dismissed a candidate to join the presbytery of New-Brunswick, installed one of their members as minister of one of their vacant congregations, licensed one candidate to preach the gospel, and put calls into the hands of two candidates which are accepted: they have likewise given attention to the order

order of the General Assembly, respecting contributions: All of which will appear by their report to the synod, No. 1.

" 2. New-Castle presbytery, consists of sixteen members, fifteen of whom have charges and one has no charge; they have five vacancies, three of which are able to support a minister separately, and two of which are able in connection to support a minister; they have four licentiates; during the year past, they have installed one of their members, as minister of the united congregations of New-Castle and Christiana Bridge; they have likewise used their endeavours to raise contributions for the funds, established by the General Assembly:—all of which will appear by their report to the synod, No. 2.

" 3. Carlisle presbytery, consists of twenty six ministers; twenty two of whom have charges and four have not charges; they have nineteen vacancies,—of which eleven are not yet able to support a minister,—three taken in connection, are able to support a minister;—two others taken connectedly are also able;—and three are able separately to support a minister; they have three licentiates; during the year past, they have licensed one candidate; they have dismissed one to join the presbytery of Lexington; the have ordained one to the work of the ministry; they have given some attention presbyterially to the raising of contributions for the funds of the General Assembly, but what has been the effect of their measures cannot at present be ascertained,—all of which will appear by their report to synod, No. 3.

" 4. Lewes Presbytery, consists of five ministers, all of whom have charges; they have three licentiates; they have six vacancies,—two of which are able in connection to support a minister,—three others, of which taken connectedly are able to support a minister, and one not able: during the year past, they have put a call from three of their vacancies into the hands of one of their candidates; they have licensed two candidates; and two congregations have raised contributions for the funds established, by order of the General Assembly,—all of which will appear from their report to the synod, No. 4.

" 5. Baltimore Presbytery, from which they synod has not been able to obtain any report; as none of their members have attended the synod, for these two years past.

Signed by Order of the Synod,

WILLIAM M. TENANT, Moderator.

" The Synod of Virginia Report that they consist of four Presbyteries; viz. Hanover, Redstone, Lexington, and Transylvania.

" The presbytery of Hanover consists of ten ordained ministers, the Reverend Messrs. John Todd, James Waddell, William Irvine, John B. Smith, Archibald M^cRobert, James Mitchel, John D. Blair, Drury Lacy, William Mahon and Nash Le Grand, all settled pastors of particular churches, and they have eight vacant congregations. They have two licenciates who are under the direction of the commission of synod, and four candidates, viz. William Cahoon, James Sumer, Samuel Brown, and Moses Waddle.

" Redstone Presbytery, consists of twelve ordained Ministers, the Rev. Messrs. James Finley, John Clark, Joseph Smith, John M^cMillan, James Power, Thadeus Dodd, James Dunlap, Joseph Paterson, James Hughes, John Brice, John M^cPharrin and Samuel Porter, all settled pastors of particular churches, Mr. Robert Finley, an ordained minister of Redstone Presbytery, has taken a dismission in order to go to Kentucky. Mr. Robert Marshall, a licentiate of Redstone presbytery, is under the care and direction of the commission of synod. They have also two candidates under trials, for the gospel ministry, George Hill and William Swan,—Mr. John Hanna formerly a candidate, is dismissed from trials. They have twenty four vacant congregations.

" The presbytery of Lexington consists of ten ordained Ministers. The Reverend Messrs John Brown, William Graham, Archibald Scott, Edward Crawford, John Montgomery, Benjamin Irvine, William Wilson, Moses Hoge, John M^cCue, Samuel Houston, all pastors of particular churches, Mr. Carrick has moved into the bounds of Abington presbytery since the last synod, they have one licentiate, Mr. John Lyle—they have six candidates—Messrs. Archibald Alexander, Benjamin Grigsby, Mathew Lyle, Thomas Poage, John Campbell, and Mathew Houston,—they have six vacancies. No report was received from the presbytery of Transylvania.

" The Synod of the Carolinas report, that they consist of three presbyteries, viz. Orange, South-Carolina and Abington.

" The presbytery of Orange consists of

" 1st ministers who have charges	-	-	10
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" ministers without any charge.	-	-	1
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" 2d Probationers who have accepted calls	-	-	3
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" probationers who have calls under consideration	-	-	2
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" 3d Probationers without calls.	-	-	4
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" 4th Candidates.	-	-	5
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" Vacancies able to support ministers	-	-	7
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" Vacancies not able to support a minister	-	-	17
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" The presbytery of South-Carolina consists of ministers who have charges. - - - 10

" Ministers who have not charges.	-	-	3
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B

" 2d Licentiates,

" 2d Licentiates.	-	-	-	-	8
" 3d Candidates.	-	-	-	-	9
" Vacancies able to support pastors.	-	-	-	-	9
" Vacancies not able to support a pastor.	-	-	-	-	29
" No members from Abington attended nor did any report reach the synod from them.					

Attested by

SAMUEL E. M'CORKLE, Synod Clerk.

It was ordered, that the following rule established by the synod of New-York and Philadelphia, in 1764, be published for the information of presbyteries.

" The synod judges that any student in divinity, who professes
 " a design to enter into the ministry, has a right, in our present
 " situation, to study for his improvement, under the direction of
 " any divine of reputation in the synod according to a former act :
 " but, that when he proposes to enter upon trials with a view to
 " the ministry he shall come under the care of that Presbytery to
 " which he most naturally belongs: and he shall be deemed most
 " naturally to belong to that Presbytery in whose bounds he has
 " been brought up and lived for the most part and where he is best
 " known. But, if another Presbytery desire that any student or
 " students should come into their bounds, or if any such student
 " or students for greater conveniency or from any circumstances
 " that make it necessary, desire to enter upon trials, in a different
 " Presbytery, upon his offering satisfactory reasons, he may be dis-
 " missed. But in either case, the presbytery to which he removes, shall
 " not receive nor admit him to come under trials upon his having
 " a certificate as a regular church member only, but he shall bring a
 " testimonial from the presbytery or several neighbouring ministers
 " where he lived, recommending him as a candidate for the mini-
 " stry of exemplary piety and holiness of conversation ; nor shall
 " any thing less be esteemed a sufficient recommendation."

On motion, Resolved, that a catalogue be kept, according to seniority in the ministry, of the names of all ministers belonging to the Presbyterian church in America ; beginning May, 1789, the period when the first General Assembly met, and that after the decease of any minister, his name shall be marked with an asterism, and opposite to it, in a column for that purpose, the time of his death shall be set down ; and in another, the name of the Presbytery to which he last belonged. And the names of new members shall be added, from year to year, when the synodical and presbyterial reports shall be made.

Agreeably to the above resolution, ordered, that every presbytery belonging to this body, shall send up to the next General Assembly, a list of all their members with the dates of their ordinations respectively.

The

The committee appointed to consider the expediency of a new impression of the Confession of Faith, form of government, and discipline of this church, reported, that, upon inquiry, they found that the demand for this book was increasing, that there were still a considerable, tho' not a sufficient, number of copies on hand, that therefore another impression appeared expedient, in which if the scripture proofs were inserted at length, it would become more acceptable, and might be of greater utility to the churches; and proposed that a committee be appointed properly to select and arrange the scripture texts to be adduced in support of the articles in the Confession of Faith, form of Government and discipline, and prepare the same, to be laid before the next General Assembly.

Resolved, That Doctor Robert Smith, Mr. Mitchell, and Mr. Grier, be a committee to carry the above into execution.

The committee appointed to draught a minute, in consequence of the reports of the several synods and presbyteries respecting collections for missionaries, and for the support of commissioners to the General Assembly, and for defraying the incidental expenses of this body, brought in the following, which was approved.

It appeared from the proceedings of the synod of New-York and New-Jersey, and the synod of Philadelphia, as well as from the presbyteries, composing those bodies, that they had directed collections to be made agreeably to the order of the assembly, and that certain sums of money so collected, had been handed to Mr. Snowden, the treasurer, or were ready for that purpose; but that some part had not been as yet sent forward. From the synods of Virginia and the Carolinas, it appeared that they supported their own missionaries, agreeably to the direction of last year's assembly, and that through mistake or want of information, one presbytery only, from those synods had made collections, for the purpose of constituting a permanent fund, for the support of commissioners. It likewise appeared to be the wish of the brethren from that quarter, that the presbyteries might be allowed to support their own commissioners. Whereupon, resolved, That the monies collected by the synod of New-York and New-Jersey, and by the synod of Philadelphia, for the purpose of supporting missionaries to the Frontiers, and not yet brought in, be, as soon as convenient, transmitted to the treasurer. And that such monies, as have been collected by presbyteries, for defraying the expenses of commissioners, be retained by them, and that each presbytery, pay their own commissioners for the future, and for attending this present assembly. And in case any presbytery has already paid into the hands of the treasurer, money for said purpose, the treasurer is hereby directed to return the same.

The committee appointed to bring in a report upon the subject of Missionaries within the bounds of the synod of the Carolinas, informed the Assembly, from the minutes of that synod, that they
have

have appointed a Commission of their body to superintend the said business, that they have appointed four missionaries at a salary of two hundred dollars each per annum, and that they are proceeding with unanimity and zeal in the prosecution of that important object.

Whereupon Resolved, that the said report be approved.

The following proposition was introduced through the committee of bills and overtures, that the General Assembly take measures to bring into distinct view, at its different sessions, the situation of the Presbyterian Church under its jurisdiction in the United States of America with respect to the state of Religion in the different presbyteries; the state of religious denominations amongst them, and the most probable expedients for reviving and promoting the essential interests of Christ's kingdom in the world.

Whereupon, resolved, that it be recommended to each synod to enjoin it upon the respective presbyteries within their bounds, to specify the above particulars in the annual reports which they make of the state of their respective churches, to be laid before the General Assembly at its stated meetings.

A question from the synod of the Carolinas was introduced through the committee of Bills and overtures, which was as follows.——

“Are they who publicly profess a belief in the doctrine of the universal and actual Salvation of the whole human race, or of the fallen angels, or both, through the mediation of Christ, to be admitted to the sealing ordinances of the Gospel?”——The Assembly determined that such persons should not be admitted.

The committee appointed to examine the state of the Treasurer's accounts, reported, that they had executed that business, and that they had found in the hands of the treasurer a balance of £148 5 3 in favour of the General Assembly.

A report was received from the Committee appointed to bring in an account of the prosecution of the plan by the synod of Virginia respecting missionaries within their bounds; which was approved.

Upon motion, resolved, that it be recommended to the several presbyteries of this church to consider whether it would be proper to extend the time necessary for young men to apply to the study of divinity before they be taken on trials, to three years at least; and to send up a report of their opinion with their commissioners to the next Assembly.

On motion, ordered that in future the arrangement of the annual presbyterial reports be according to the seniority of the congregations of which each presbytery is composed.

The Reverend James M'Donald and the Reverend David Austin, and Mr. Isaac Grier, a probationer under the care of Carlisle

Carlisle presbytery, were appointed missionaries from this Assembly to the Frontier Settlements, for the space of four Months, to commence on the 15th June next.

Resolved, that the sum of $33\frac{1}{3}$ dollars per month be allowed to each missionary for his service, and that the treasurer advance to each the sum of fifty dollars, to be accounted for by them as part of their salary.

A proposition respecting the propriety and utility of a mission into the state of Maryland and places adjacent was brought in by the committee of overtures and submitted. The General Assembly approved of the proposition, and appointed the Reverend John Craighead a missionary into those parts, to spend two months on that business, and resolved that he be allowed the same compensation per month as the missionaries before appointed, and that the treasurer advance 25 dollars to be accounted for as part of his salary.

On motion, resolved, that the river Potowmac be the boundary line between the synods of Philadelphia and Virginia, except the congregation of Alexandria, which shall belong to the synod of Philadelphia.

Ordered that Mr. Monteith supply the pulpit at Elizabeth Town the 1st Lord's day in July:—Rev. Mr. Faitoute 2d Lord's day in July:—Doct. Witherpoon the 3d Lord's day in July:—Doct. Smith Princeton 4th Lord's day in July and Rev. John Smith, Philadelphia, 5th Lord's day in July: and that the presbytery of New-York at their meeting on the last Tuesday of June, do take measures, to supply the pulpit at Elizabeth Town, the whole remaining Sabbaths, if Mr. Austin shall be absent on the present proposed mission, except the last Lord's day in September, when Doct. Green is appointed to supply:—Mr. Gilbert Snowden was appointed to supply Mr. M'Donald's pulpit for six Lord's days:—Dr. M'Knight, do. three Lord's days—Mr. Monteith, do. five Lord's days and Mr. William Smith, of New-Castle presbytery do. for three Lord's days—Dr. Wetherpoon, was appointed to supply Mr. Snowden's pulpit the third Lord's day in June—Dr. S. Smith, the fourth do.—Mr. Woodhull the first Lord's day in July—Mr. Clark, the second do.—Mr. Grant, the third do. and Mr. Hanna, the fourth do.

Mr. Nath. Woodhull, was appointed to supply Dr. M'Knight's pulpit the fifth Lord's day in July—Mr. John B. Smith, the first Lord's day in August and Dr. Witherpoon, the second do. Mr. Irwin, of Philadelphia presbytery was appointed to supply Mr. Monteith's pulpit the fifth Lord's day in August, Mr. Irwin's pulpit to be supplied by Mr. Hunter,—Mr. William Boyd, the fourth do. Mr. Rice the first do. in September—Mr. James Boyd, the second do.—Mr. Armstrong the third do.

Dr.

Dr. Robert Smith, was appointed to supply Mr. William Smith's pulpit, the fourth Lord's day in September—Mr. Grier the fifth do. and Mr. M^cCurry's the first of October.

Doctor Green, Mr. John B. Smith and Isaac Snowden, Esq. were appointed a committee to make extracts from the minutes for publication, and to have 1000 copies published, and sent to the different prebyteries as soon as possible.

Resolved that the next General Assembly meet in the second Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, on the third Thursday in May, 1793, at 11 o'Clock A. M. adjourned and

Concluded by Prayer,

JOHN KING, Moderator.

